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letters in order to render the various forms of the dental sibilant; namely, *ç*, *ç*, *ç*, *ç*, and *s*. The abbreviations have, for the most part, been resolved, and the corresponding letters are put in italics. The horizontal stroke, when used to represent palatalization of the letter *n*, is transcribed as a *tilde* (saña, año), otherwise it is interpreted as *n* (mueran, nonlo). In those cases when the stroke is superfluous, or where its value is doubtful, it has been retained, thus we find such forms as grañd, cieñt, fecho, coño, oñe. I reproduce, herewith, the first two stanzas of the text, omitting the foot-notes corresponding to the numerals 1-4:

Señor¹ dios *que* aloç jodjoç pueblo de perdiçion
facaſte de cabtino del poder de fa[raon]²,
adaniel facaſte del poço de babilon,
faca amj coytaſto deſta mala prefion.

Señor tu diſte *gracia* aeſter la Reyna,
antel (*sic*) el rrey afuero ouo tu *gracia* digna:
ſeñor, da me tu *gracia* e tu merced Ayna;
facamez deſta laſeria deſta prefion⁴.

It is somewhat difficult to decide when the horizontal stroke over a letter is superfluous, consequently we find the stroke retained in 'nōl,' 'nīl,' but transcribed as *n* in 'conella' (538 d); likewise, we see "con nel (*sic*)" (46 c) in contrast to "conel" (341 b). Indeed it is to be regretted that the editor has not preserved intact all the abbreviations, thereby keeping his text one step nearer the original manuscripts.

While it has been the aim of the present reviewer to give a brief description of the contents and purpose of this new edition, it is impossible to convey an adequate impression of the patience and skill exhibited by the editor in the preparation of the introduction, text, variants, and foot-notes. While the book is intended primarily for the student of language, persons interested in Spanish literature will find welcome material in the seventeen hitherto unpublished stanzas,⁶ and in the *Index de noms propres*. In short, the present edition is an invaluable contribution to our knowledge of Old Spanish, and, although the editor makes no promises, I hope he may supplement the book by a critical study of the text.

6 Nos. 385, and 436-451. See also no. 1656.

In many respects Juan Ruiz is the most important figure of his time, and the publication of the manuscripts of his verses forms an appropriate sequel to Knust's recent study of Juan Manuel, the Arcipreste's famous contemporary.

C. CARROLL MARDEN.

Johns Hopkins University.

LITERARY HISTORY OF AMERICA.

A Literary History of America. By BARRETT WENDELL, Professor of English at Harvard College. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 1900.

THE most striking fact about American literature is its retardation. The earliest colonists came over in the heat of religious and political controversies, and brought with them the Bible—that is, Religion, and the Common Law—that is, Politics. When they had set up (in New England at least) a commonwealth as nearly resembling the old Hebrew theocracy as was possible for Englishmen, and substituted the despotism of the pulpit for the despotism of the throne, they naturally found that politics and religion merged into one. Thus the whole literature (if we can call it literature) of the seventeenth century was theological; re-arguing in heavy prose, or droning in unmelodious verse, the doctrines which had been alive at the beginning of the century. They were out of the world; embayed from all currents of transformation; and the changes that England passed through from James I. to Anne, from Shakespeare to Dryden, practically touched them not. In art and letters the beginning of the eighteenth century found them a hundred years behind.

But the middle of the century saw an advance. America became conscious of itself, and ceased to be a detached piece of England. New England had shaken off the shackles of her rigid theology; and secular politics, the nature and duties of government, and the rights of the people, especially the American people, now occupied men's minds. To this extent the literature was American: in thought it was English, and in expression it modelled itself on the *Spectator*, Swift, and Pope.

The beginning of the nineteenth century saw

the attempt to produce a genuine American literature—at least a literature dealing with American subjects. Brockden Brown, Cooper, and Irving founded American fiction. An indisputable poet arose in Bryant; a really original genius in Poe. The “Knickerbocker School,” if it produced nothing that was excellent, produced at least more than a little that was respectable. The revived New England, with Prescott, Parkman, Emerson, Whittier, Longfellow, went beyond respectability, and even promised excellence. It had also an original genius and delicate artist combined in Hawthorne; but with nearly all the rest, the fault was that the artists were not thinkers, and the thinkers were not artists. All things seemed to foreshadow the rise of a literature which should be original as well as artistic; should be distinctively American in moods of thought and feeling, and with some claim to take a place of its own among the literatures of the world.

Such a literature, however, has not yet appeared, though it may be at the door. We have writers in abundance, and the presses groan with American books, but somehow literary power seems to fail us. Prof. Wendell (the thread of whose narrative we have been following) in the section entitled “The Rest of the Story,” gives us a rather disheartening outlook. He thinks that “newspaper humour, the short stories of the magazines, and the popular Stage, seem the sources from which a characteristic American literature is most likely to spring.”

If these be indeed the germs from which our literature of the twentieth century is to take its origin, they must be endowed with some element of vitality not visible to the present writer.

This book is incomparably the best on the subject that has come under our notice. The movement in literature is co-ordinated with the social and political movements, without which treatment a so-called history of literature is nothing but a handbook for reference. The author's views are broad and liberal, his judgment sound, and the work shows throughout a candor and freedom from bias which are beyond praise.

WM. HAND BROWNE.

Johns Hopkins University.

FRENCH LITERATURE.

TO THE EDITORS OF MOD. LANG. NOTES,

SIRS:—*A Short History of French Literature*, by L. E. Kastner and H. E. Atkins of Cambridge, England, has recently appeared. Considering the small space into which the writers have compressed their vast materials, the main currents of tendency in the different periods of French literature are admirably stated. The writers are evidently permeated with the ideas of M. Brunetière, and their book is, on the theoretical side, in the main, a reflection of his doctrines. In the treatment of individual writers, likewise, the data furnished by the best French criticism are again very felicitously summarized, but an occasional slip in dealing with such a multitude of facts is inevitable.

In a work of such small compass it was impossible to aim at originality, to adapt the presentation to the Anglo-Saxon's angle of vision, to accentuate the things in French literature that he less easily apprehends or most needs, or to enlighten the subject by that constant comparison or contrast of literary phenomena offered by two parallel literatures.

A few corrections and observations are offered:

P. 60, it is stated that “already in 1550 Ronsard was fully established and looked upon as the prince of poets.” And on p. 63: “Already a year after the publication of the *Pléiade's* manifesto, Ronsard was recognized as the greatest living poet.” This is placing it at least several years too early and would imply instant recognition.

Du Bellay (p. 65) can hardly be called the most *original* poet of the *Pléiade*, since compared with the wide scope of Ronsard, he succeeded only in *la poésie intime*.

Montaigne (p. 85) is accused of a *somewhat hurried departure* at the time of the Bordeaux plague—in reality he was absent and refused to return. See his letters.

The statement (p. 88) that athletic training is too much neglected in Montaigne's system of education is not tenable. “Ce n'est pas assez de lui roidir l'âme, il lui faut aussi roidir les muscles, etc.” (*Essais* I, 25.) “Il le faut